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Title:

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Dunstan
AHP 28/9/59

D.H.D. 3426

Good evening. A great deal of time and money has been spent by the Playford Government in publicity to the effect that great things are being accomplished in education in South Australia. Expensive pamphlets & circulars have been put out by our Education Dept. which appears to have someone engaged in permanent work on public relations for Mr. Paterson the Education Minister.

Some very pretty stories have been told, and the papers often publish the picture of Mr. Paterson smilingly performing some function at a school, often surrounded by smiling children - a picture of joy & of achievement. This is a picture which it is sedulously sought that people in this State should retain in their minds, & those upon whom it has already registered do from time to time get a pretty rude shock when faced with some of the realities.

~~Firstly~~ The facts are that in 1944 the standard of the Education Dept. in South Australia was not high - ~~low~~ and the Education Dept. were laying down certain standards which they felt must be maintained. Birth statistics were then showing that South Australia was going to have a large increase in school enrolments in years to come - a much larger increase than it had known before & much larger proportionately than that of any other State. Despite this fact until 1954 the ~~Playford~~ Playford Govt. not only did nothing to provide adequately for the crisis which education would face -

it rejected the suggestion made by Oppenheimer
 members that the situation called for urgent
 & energetic action. In 1953 ^{in this State} there were
 still less than half the student teachers in
 training that Western Australia had in
 training at the time ^{if there were graduating from the teachers}
 college less teachers for secondary schools
 I have quoted the statistics for comparison

Nowwood High School is one of the top-ranking high schools in this State. It was built to take a maximum of some 300 odd students. It now has an enrolment of over 1100 and that will rise by more than 200 in 1960. The school is small in area. Already ~~the~~ wooden "temporary" classrooms have badly encroached on the limited playing space. It is bursting at the seams.

Over six years ago the ^{Education} Department acquired land at Majill to build a new high school. But it didn't buy enough, & for those six years the department has been urged to acquire additional land at the Majill site - which they finally did last year. But meanwhile the ^{existing} school was overcrowded and no new high school was begun.

Now it was obvious to all that no-one could squeeze more children into the existing school in 1960 & that the new school must take some of its pupils in that year. As time has gone on everyone connected with the school has become more & more alarmed. For time is growing slow & there are few signs of activity. The Minister has been repeatedly questioned concerning the building of the new school & has staved off saying the school would be ready. Then he said he was concerned but was "quietly confident" that it would be ready. Now last week ~~to~~ when I questioned him further in Parliament about the new high school he had this to say:

That he was concerned also about the position as to accommodation in high schools & if new schools were not ready in time he would see that accommodation was provided for students & if necessary this would be provided in technical schools, or class might be dispersed among primary schools in the area.

Now this is a shocking situation. There are no primary schools in the area which have surplus accommodation. It has taken many years to get the work of the boys technical school to its site in Morayville, & the girls technical school & the primary school are in need of all the accommodation at demand time.

If new students for Norwood High School - and the overflow if the new school is not ready will be some 200 are disposed to other schools in the area it will mean not only that the education these children will be receiving will be under conditions scarcely less than adequate - it means that children whose proper accommodation in existing schools they take will not be properly catered for either. This amazing lack of foresight and adequate provision is quite incredible. I can't be said that men & materials are not available. When we see the speed with which totally unnecessary service stations are erected within the Norwood High School District, the speed of or lack of it in erecting the new Norwood High School must cause us some anger.

But the matter does not end there. Taken as a whole, the Education Department just does not have enough trained staff.

Let me quote from the Minister's last report again. (taken in passage marked in ink top of p. 6)

This means that about one in six teachers does not have the minimum qualifications which the department requires of an adequately trained teacher. In fact this means that a high proportion of unqualified teachers are teaching our children - to say nothing of those who have reached the retiring age & been re-employed. No other State has such a high proportion of teachers without adequate qualifications, & no other State has such a high proportion of teachers in the lowest brackets of its salary scale. The plain facts are that not only is accommodation not being provided for children - there are not the teachers to teach them. These are the realities of education in South Australia today. *Gooding Es.*

28th September, 1959.

Good Evening:

A great deal of time and money has been spent by the Playford Government in publicity to the effect that great things are being accomplished in education in South Australia. Expensive pamphlets and circulars have been put out by our Education Department which appears to have someone engaged in permanent work on public relations for Mr. Pattinson the Education Minister.

Come very pretty stories have been told and the papers often publish the picture of Mr. Pattinson smilingly performing some function at a school, often surrounded by smiling children - a picture of joy and of achievement. This is a picture which it is sedulously sought that people in this State should retain in their minds and those upon whom it has already registered do from time to time get a pretty rude shock when faced with some of the realities.

The facts are that in 1944 the standard of the Education Department in South Australia was not high - and the Education Inquiry then laid down certain standards which they felt must be maintained. Birth statistics were then showing that South Australia was going to have a large increase in school enrolments in years to come - a much larger increase than it had known before and much larger proportionately than that of any other State. Despite this fact, until 1954 the Playford Government not only did nothing to provide adequately for this crisis which education would face - it rejected the suggestions made by Opposition members that the situation called for urgent and energetic action. In 1953 in this State there were still less than half the student teachers in training that Western Australia had in training at the time and ^{there} ~~there~~ were graduating from the Teachers College less teachers for secondary schools than were needed to replace the annual wastage.

I have quoted the statistics for comparative spending on education more than once before on this program. I will not bore you with them again but will merely repeat that the Commonwealth Grants Commission figures show that this State has consistently spent less per head per year on education than any other State except Queensland.

Let us see what we needed to spend. I will quote from the last report of the Minister of Education himself:-

"It is well known that the increase in enrolments in South Australian primary and secondary schools in recent years has been a very large one. It is perhaps not so well known that the increase in South Australia is proportionately very much greater than in many other systems of public education. For the 11 years from 1947 to 1958 the percentage increase in the schools of England and Wales was 26 per cent for primary pupils, 57 per cent for secondary pupils, and 36 per cent for the total number; in South Australia the corresponding figures are 103 per cent for primary pupils, 148 per cent for secondary pupils and 110 per cent for the total number. In other Australian States, the total increase for the same period ranged from 56 per cent to 76 per cent, and their average increase was 60 per cent for primary pupils, 82 per cent for secondary pupils and 65 per cent for the total number."

This shows that South Australia's increase was just on twice the average increase in Australia and well more than twice the average of the other States. So we needed to spend much more than other States on education. We haven't done it and we aren't doing it.

When the Minister is criticised he replies by retailing long lists of schools or school buildings which he says are being built or will be built. Well let's just take a simple example of the provision of accommodation. There are many others - many of you who are listening to me will be able to think of examples within your own experience. I take the example of Norwood High School since it is close to home for me.

Norwood High School is one of the top-ranking high schools in this State. It was built to take a maximum of some 300 odd students. It now has an enrolment of over 1,100 and that will rise by more than 200 in 1960. The school is small in area. Already wooden "temporary" classrooms have badly encroached on the limited playing space. It is bursting at the seams.

Over six years ago the Education Department acquired land at Magill to build a new high school. But it didn't buy enough and for these six years the department has been urged to acquire additional land at the Magill site - which they finally did last year. But meanwhile the existing school was overcrowded and no new high school was begun.

Now it was obvious to all that no-one could squeeze more children into the existing school in 1960 and that the new school must take some of the pupils in that year. As time has gone on everyone connected with the school has become more and more alarmed. For time is growing short and there are few

signs of activity. The Minister has been repeatedly questioned concerning the building of the new School and started by saying the school would be ready. Then he said he was concerned but was "quietly confident" that it would be ready. Now last week when I questioned him further in Parliament about the new high school he had this to say. That he was concerned also about the position as to accommodation in high schools and if new schools were not ready in time he would see that accommodation was provided for students and if necessary this would be provided in technical schools or classes might be dispersed among primary schools in the area.

Now this is a shocking situation. There are no primary schools in the area which have surplus accommodation. It has taken many years to get the whole of the boys' technical school to its site in Marryatville and the girls' technical school and the primary school have need of all the accommodation at Osmond Terrace.

If new students for Norwood High School - and the overflow if the new school is not ready - will be some 200 - are dispersed to other schools in the area it will mean not only that the education those children will be receiving will be under conditions startlingly less than adequate - it means that children whose proper accommodation in existing schools by they take will not be properly catered for either. This annoying lack of foresight and adequate provision is quite inexcusable. It can't be said that men and materials are not available. When we see the speed with which totally unnecessary service stations are erected within the Norwood High School district, the speed or lack of it in erecting the new Norwood High School must cause us some anger.

But the matter does not end there. Taken as a whole, the Education Department just does not have enough trained staff. Let me quote from the Minister's last report again.

"The number of temporary teachers in the service rose from 1,867 to 2,023, or 39.1 per cent of the total number of full-time teachers. This percentage has been precisely the same for the last three years. More than half of these temporary teachers (52.2 percent) are fully qualified teachers who have re-joined the service after marriage or after reaching the ordinary retiring age, or who have obtained their qualifications after commencing as unclassified teachers."

This means that about one in six teachers does not have the minimum qualifications which the department requires of an adequately trained teacher.

In fact this means that a high proportion of unqualified teachers are teaching our children - to say nothing of those who have reached the retiring age and have been re-employed. No other State has such a high proportion of teachers without adequate qualifications and no other State has such a high proportion of teachers in the lowest bracket of its salary scale. The plain facts are that not only is accommodation not being provided for children but there are not the teachers to teach them. These are the realities of education in South Australia to-day.

Good Night.